REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed January 25, 2008, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. To further the prosecution of this application, amendments have been made in the claims, and each of the rejections set forth in the Office Action has been carefully considered and is addressed below. The claims as presented are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-41 were previously pending in this application. Claims 1, 4, 13, 16, 25 and 27 are amended herein. No claims have been added or canceled. As a result, claims 1-41 remain pending for examination, with claims 1, 4, 13, 16, 25 and 27 being independent. No new matter has been added.

Telephone Interview With Examiner

Applicant's representatives thank Examiner Swearingen for the courtesies extended in granting and conducting a telephone interview on April 22, 2008. The substance of the interview is summarized herein.

Objection to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings for being handwritten and purportedly illegible. Submitted herewith are formal drawings of FIGS. 1-5. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to the drawings.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,100,195 to Underwood ("Underwood"). Independent claims 1, 4, 13, 16, 25 and 27 are amended herein. Each independent claim clearly distinguishes over Underwood.

A.   Brief Overview of Embodiments of the Invention

During the interview, Applicant's representatives provided an overview of embodiments of the invention, which relate generally to performing context management. By way of background, it was explained that in some commercial settings, certain entities, or "subjects," may be shared by multiple software applications (see Applicant's specification at, e.g., p. 1, lines 9-10). As an example, users in the healthcare field commonly provide input to multiple applications relating to a particular patient (p.1, lines 10-12). These applications may manage clinical information (e.g., x-ray images or blood work results), financial information (e.g., insurance coverage or billing history), or other data (p.1, lines 12-14).

Data describing a given subject (in this example, a patient), and which is used commonly by multiple applications, is referred to in Applicant's specification as a "context" defined by the subject (p. 1, lines 22-23). Although patient data is an illustrative example, other data may define a subject as well, such as data relating to a clinical encounter, provider, observation, insurer, user (e.g., to enable "single sign-on" capabilities for the multiple applications) and/or other data (p.1, lines 15-19). In addition, shared subjects may be used in other fields besides healthcare (p. 1, lines 15-21).

Historically, the user was forced to repeat the entry of data relating to one or more subjects to each application (p. 1, lines 14-15). However, the desirability of managing a context defined by one or more subjects across multiple applications has been recognized, and standards for context management have been defined (p.1, lines 23-26). For example, the Health Level 7 (HL 7) context management specification, published in 1999 by the Clinical Context Object Work Group (CCOW), defines an overall architecture and detailed processes for managing context across a range of healthcare-related applications (p., lines 26-30).

Certain aspects of the present invention relate to performing context management in a networked computing environment (p. 12, lines 7-10). For example, one embodiment of the invention relates specifically to emulated applications, wherein an application executes on a remote application server and is emulated (e.g., via the Citrix MetaFrame and ICA architecture) on a client device (p. 13, lines 8-10). In this respect, Applicant has recognized that when the applications that

may share a context include a remote application and a desktop application, it may be desirable to verify that the remote application and the desktop application are associated with the same client (i.e., that the remote application is emulated on the client on which the desktop application executes), to prevent a "rogue" application executing remotely from the desktop from intruding into the context (p. 25, lines 15-20). Accordingly, one embodiment of the invention provides a method for verifying that a remote application is emulated on the same client on which at least one desktop application executes, so that it may share a context with the desktop application(s) (p. 25, lines 20-22). In one implementation, first information (e.g., a first identifier) is received from the client, second information (e.g., a second identifier) is received from the remote application server that identifies the client on which the remote application is emulated, and the information (e.g., the first and second identifiers) is compared to determine whether the remote application is emulated on the client on which the desktop application(s) execute(s) (p. 25, lines 22-25).

Another embodiment may be employed in system configurations in which a client emulates multiple remote applications executing on different remote application servers, to verify that remote applications executing on different remote application servers are emulated on the same client and can share a context (p. 29, lines 9-12). In one exemplary implementation, first information (e.g., a first identifier) is received from a first remote application server which identifies the client on which a first remote application is emulated, second information (e.g., a second identifier) is received from a second remote application server which identifies the client on which a second remote application is emulated, and the information is examined to determine whether the first and second remote applications are emulated on the same client and may share a context (p. 29, lines 13-16).

The foregoing overview is provided to assist the Examiner in appreciating some aspects of the invention. However, this overview may not apply to each independent claim, and the language of each independent claim may differ in material respects from the overview above. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that careful consideration be given to the language of each independent claim, and that each be addressed on its own merits, without relying on the overview provided above. In this respect, Applicants do not rely on the overview above to distinguish any of the claims over the prior art.

B.   Rejection of Independent Claims 1, 4, 13, 16, 25 and 27

Following the presentation of the overview above, the discussion turned to the rejection of the independent claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by Underwood. Prior to the interview, Applicant's representatives had sent an agenda to the Examiner which included proposed amendments to independent claims 1, 4, 13, 16, 25 and 27. The proposed amendments were intended to explicitly recite what is meant by the context that is shared by the plurality of applications in each independent claim.

Specifically, Applicant's representatives proposed amending independent claims 1, 4, 13, 16, 25 and 27 to include limitations directed to a context, shared by a plurality of applications, which is defined by subject data usable by the plurality of applications. The subject data describes at least one subject, and comprises, for each subject, a data item having a set of values comprising at least a first value corresponding to at least a first of the plurality of applications and at least a second value corresponding to at least a second of the plurality of applications. The set of values identify the subject in the context.

Applicant's representatives explained that Underwood fails to satisfy these limitations. Underwood discloses a Resources E-commerce Technology Architecture (RETA) that is used to manage the difficulties associated with integrating third-party packaged components into a custom e-commerce website (col. 10, lines 8-27). In the passage cited by the Office Action, Underwood discloses techniques for integrating components developed using the Microsoft Transaction Server (MTS) framework (col. 22, lines 25-36). Underwood discloses a method, described with reference to FIG. 1.4, whereby "context objects" are used by a plurality of components on an MTS transaction server (col. 21, line 66 - col. 22, line 1).

During the interview, Applicant's representatives explained that the type of "context" disclosed by Underwood is unrelated to the subject matter of the independent claims. Underwood simply fails to disclose or suggest anything at all relating to a context, shared by a plurality of applications, which is defined by subject data usable by the plurality of applications. The subject data describes at least one subject, and comprises, for each subject, a data item

having a set of values comprising at least a first value corresponding to at least a first of the plurality of applications and at least a second value corresponding to at least a second of the plurality of applications.

The Examiner evidenced an appreciation for this point, and indicated that if these limitations were recited in the body of each independent claim (the proposed amendments included these limitations in the preamble of each claim), then the rejections under §§102 and 112 would be overcome. Each independent claim has been so amended. For example, in independent claim 1, which is directed to a method, these limitations are added to the act (d).

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claims 1, 4, 13, 16, 25 and 27, and of the claims that depend respectively therefrom, under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by Underwood be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-24 and 35-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for purportedly omitting essential structural cooperative relationships of claim elements. As discussed above, during the interview, the Examiner indicated that adding limitations to the body of each of independent claims 1, 4, 13 and 16 relating to the context that is shared by a plurality of applications would overcome the rejection under §112. These claims have been so amended. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-24 and 35-39 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.
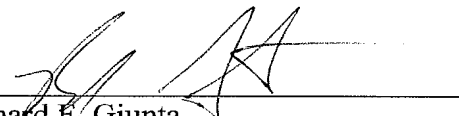
Application No. 10/632,690   20   Docket No.: S1389.70015US00
Amendment dated April 25, 2008
Reply to Office Action of January 25, 2008

CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Dated: 4/25/08

Respectfully submitted,

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